

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A consumable for a device in communication with a host device, said consumable comprising:

a housing;

a nonvolatile memory;

5 consumable-related information originally stored on said nonvolatile memory; and

a communication interface for facilitating communication with said device, wherein said host device accesses said consumable-related information through said device.

2. The consumable of claim 1 wherein said device is an image forming device and includes image forming material contained in said housing for use in forming images.

3. The consumable of claim 1 wherein said device and said host device are configured as a single system.

4. The consumable of claim 1 wherein said host device is a discrete device operably connectable to said device.

5. The consumable of claim 4 wherein said host device comprises a general purpose computer.

6. A method for providing consumable-related data to a user of an office automation system comprising the steps of:

storing said consumable-related data onto a memory disposed on a consumable;

interfacing said consumable with said office automation system;

5 selecting said consumable-related data;

transmitting said selected consumable-related data to said office automation system;

and

presenting said transmitted consumable-related data to said user.

7. The method of claim 6 further comprising the step of:

communicating said transmitted consumable-related data to a host system, wherein said presenting step is conducted on said host system.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein said host system comprises a general purpose computer.

9. The method of claim 6 wherein said presenting step comprises the step of:

displaying said transmitted consumable-related data on a computer display.

10. The method of claim 6 wherein said presenting step comprises the step of:

printing said transmitted consumable-related data.

11. A processing system comprising:
- means for controlling functions of said processing system;
 - means for originally storing consumable-oriented information on a consumable of said processing system;
 - 5 means for selecting portions of said consumable-oriented information;
 - means for communicating said consumable-oriented information from said consumable to said means for controlling; and
 - means for providing said selected portions of said consumable-oriented information to a user.
12. The system of claim 11 wherein said means for communicating include:
- means for interfacing said consumable with said processing system.
13. The system of claim 11 wherein said means for providing comprises a video monitor.
14. The system of claim 11 wherein said means for providing comprise:
- means for printing.
15. The system of claim 11 further comprising:
- means for coupling a host system to said processing system.
16. The system of claim 15 wherein said host system comprises a general purpose computer.

17. The system of claim 15 wherein said means for providing is operably connected to said host system.

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